



Kimberly T. Smith

Partner and Global Chair, Corporate Department

Private Equity

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The global chair of Katten's Corporate department, Kimberly Smith helps her clients buy, sell and invest in businesses. Widely honored for her work across a range of industries, her true talent lies in structuring complex transactions and eliminating all road blocks to making them happen.

The power of experience

Described by clients as “tremendously impressive” and having a “calm and steady presence on a deal” (*Chambers USA* 2023 survey responses), Kimberly has vast experience in the mergers and acquisitions transactions she handles. It arms her with insight into current market terms as well as knowledge of challenges that commonly arise. At the same time, every deal involves unique considerations. Whether representing a private equity fund, family office, independent sponsor, strategic acquirer or business seller, Kimberly listens to what really matters to them in each transaction. Then, she strategizes accordingly and gets the deal done.

Kimberly frequently counsels private equity funds and strategic acquirers buying and selling health care services businesses that use practice management models. She has worked extensively on transactions involving search funds and independent sponsors. She also is a member of Katten's Executive Committee and its Board of Directors.

Recognitions

Recognized or listed in the following:

- *Chambers USA*
 - Corporate/M&A: Private Equity, 2021–2022
 - Private Equity: Buyouts, 2023–2025
- *Crain's Chicago Business*
 - Notable Gen X Leaders in Accounting, Consulting and Law, 2021–2022
 - Chicago's Notable Women Lawyers, 2018
 - Notable Women in Law, 2020, 2022, 2024

Practices

- Corporate
- Corporate Governance
- Health Care
- Health Care Services Private Equity
- Health Care Transactions
- Independent Sponsors
- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Private Equity
- Private Equity Regulatory Compliance

Industries

- Education Private Equity
- Entrepreneurial Ventures
- Family Offices
- Finance and Financial Markets
- Insurance Private Equity
- Manufacturing and Industrials Private Equity
- Technology

Education

- JD, Georgetown University Law Center
- BS, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, *summa cum laude*, Bronze Tablet

Bar Admissions

- Illinois

Community Involvements

- Law360, Private Equity Editorial Board, 2022, 2023, 2025

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- The Most Influential Women Lawyers in Chicago, 2017
- Notable M&A Dealmakers, 2025
- *Leading Lawyers Network*
 - 2020-2025
- *Mergers & Acquisitions*
 - Most Influential Women in Mid-Market M&A, 2021–2025
- *National Law Journal*
 - Mergers & Acquisitions and Antitrust Trailblazer, 2016
- *The Deal*
 - Top Women in Dealmaking, 2023
- *The Legal 500 United States*
 - Leading Partner, 2025
 - Recommended Attorney, 2016–2024
- *Working Mother*
 - Mother of the Year, 2019

News

- Katten Corporate Partners Honored as Notable M&A Dealmakers (August 18, 2025)
- Kimberly Smith Quoted in *Octus* on Increase in Carve-Out Deals (July 21, 2025)
- Katten Receives High Marks in the Legal 500 US 2025 Guide (June 11, 2025)
- *Chambers USA 2025* Ranks Katten as Leading Law Firm (June 5, 2025)
- Katten 2025 Middle-Market Private Equity Report Garners Broad Media Coverage (April 29, 2025)
- Katten Counsels Maxwell Street Capital Partners in Port Jersey Logistics Investment (April 4, 2025)
- Katten Report Finds Dealmakers Balancing Hope for a Steadying Private Equity Market Against Lingering Economic and Policy Uncertainty (April 3, 2025)
- Five Katten Partners Named as Members of *Law360* 2025 Editorial Boards (March 28, 2025)

- Boys and Girls Clubs of Chicago, Corporate Board Member

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"Kim has a great way of working with opposing counsel, adopting a solution-oriented approach. She's extremely good."

***Chambers USA 2025
(Illinois, Private Equity: Buyouts)
survey response***

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- Kimberly Smith Discusses Impact of Tariffs on M&A Activity with *Law360* (March 24, 2025)
- Kimberly Smith Quoted in *American Lawyer* on M&A Activity (March 18, 2025)
- Kimberly Smith Comments on M&A Activity in *Mergers & Acquisitions* (March 13, 2025)
- Kimberly Smith Named Again to Most Influential Women in Mid-Market M&A List by *Mergers & Acquisitions* (January 9, 2025)
- Katten Recruits Veteran Federal Trade Commission Attorney (November 4, 2024)
- Katten Represents Pfingsten Partners in Sale of RapidAir to Gryphon Investors (October 23, 2024)
- Katten Highly Ranked in Legal 500 United States 2024 (June 12, 2024)
- Katten Receives High Marks in *Chambers USA* Guide 2024 (June 6, 2024)
- Leslie Minier, Kimberly Smith and Janet Hoffman Recognized by *Crain's* as Notable Women in Law (February 23, 2024)
- Kimberly Smith Recognized Among 2024's Most Influential Women in Mid-Market M&A (January 10, 2024)
- Katten Represents Shorehill in Sale of Power Grid Components to Blackstone (December 14, 2023)
- Kimberly Smith, Mark Solomon and Ramana Rameswaran Tapped for *Law360* Editorial Boards (September 1, 2023)
- Kimberly Smith Discusses Potential M&A Rebound During *American Lawyer* Interview (August 15, 2023)
- Katten Lauded in The Legal 500 United States 2023 (June 9, 2023)
- Katten Boosts Rankings in *Chambers USA Guide* 2023 (June 1, 2023)
- *The Deal* Honors Kimberly Smith and Emily Watson as 'Top Women in Dealmaking 2023' (March 31, 2023)
- *Middle Market Growth* Delves Into Katten's Middle-Market Private Equity Report (March 22, 2023)
- *Mergers & Acquisitions* Again Names Kimberly Smith Among Most Influential Women in Mid-Market M&A (March 15, 2023)
- Katten Mid-Market Private Equity Report Covered by Multiple Media Outlets (February 2, 2023)

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- Katten Report Finds Dealmakers Differ on Private Equity Outlook; Find Opportunity Amid Uncertainty (January 26, 2023)
- Katten Builds on M&A/PE Practice With Partner Harold Davidson (January 18, 2023)
- Katten Adds Partner Emily Watson to M&A/PE Practice (December 12, 2022)
- *Crain's* Recognizes Kimberly Smith and Lance Zinman as Notable Gen X Leaders (December 9, 2022)
- Katten Awarded Top Ranking in Structured Finance: Securitization in The Legal 500 United States 2022 (June 8, 2022)
- Katten Ranked Leading Law Firm by *Chambers USA* 2022 (June 1, 2022)
- Katten UK Expands Corporate Practice With PwC Legal Hire (May 23, 2022)
- Katten Grows its Mergers and Acquisitions/Private Equity Team (May 2, 2022)
- Kimberly Smith and Kenya Woodruff to Serve on *Law360* Editorial Advisory Boards (April 27, 2022)
- *Mergers & Acquisitions Magazine* Again Names Kimberly Smith to its List of Most Influential Women in Mid-Market M&A (March 1, 2022)
- Kimberly Smith Discusses Middle-Market Deal Activity on 'Drinks With *The Deal*' Podcast (February 4, 2022)
- Kimberly Smith and Lance Zinman Named to *Crain's* Notable Gen X Leaders in Accounting, Consulting and Law (November 22, 2021)
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resource Center (November 10, 2021)
- *Law.com* Profiles Kimberly Smith's Career and Rise to Corporate Department Chair (September 30, 2021)
- Katten's Industry Leading Corporate Practice Continues to Grow (September 14, 2021)
- Katten Adds Capital Markets Partner (July 12, 2021)
- Katten Receives High Marks in Derivatives, M&A and Securitization in The Legal 500 United States 2021 Guide (June 10, 2021)
- Katten Survey Reveals SPACs Continue to Be Viewed as Favorable Investment Opportunities (May 24, 2021)
- Katten Launches 2021 SPAC Survey Report (May 24, 2021)
- Katten Boosts Rankings in *Chambers USA* 2021 (May 20, 2021)

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- Katten's New Corporate Attorney Focuses on M&A and Fashion Industry Counsel (May 19, 2021)
- Katten Appoints Kimberly Smith as Corporate Global Chair (April 19, 2021)
- Kimberly Smith Named to Top 25 Most Influential Women in Mid-Market M&A in 2021 (February 4, 2021)
- Kimberly Smith Talks to *Law360* About Mergers and Acquisitions in Light of the Election (October 23, 2020)
- Kimberly Smith Talks to *Business Insider* About Acceleration of Private Equity Deal Activity (October 20, 2020)
- Business Media and Pet Industry Take Note of Katten Private Equity in Animal Care Survey (October 2, 2020)
- Kimberly Smith Joins Middle Market Growth Conversations Podcast to Talk About Katten's Survey on PE Investment in Animal Care (October 1, 2020)
- Kimberly Smith Featured in *Law360* Q&A Series on COVID-19's Impact on M&A/PE Investments (September 7, 2020)
- *Petfood Industry* Features Kimberly Smith on Katten Private Equity in Animal Care Survey (August 12, 2020)
- Katten Survey Finds Animal Care a Ripe Target for Private Equity, Even Amid COVID-19 (July 27, 2020)
- Katten Builds on Its Award-Winning M&A/PE Team (May 29, 2020)
- *The Deal* Talks to Kimberly Smith about Deal Making During COVID-19 (May 14, 2020)
- Kimberly Smith Addresses Private Equity Fundraising with *Law360* (April 27, 2020)
- Kimberly Smith Talks to *FundFire* About Advising Private Equity Funds in the Wake of the CARES Act (April 20, 2020)
- Kimberly Smith Comments on CARES Act Loans for Private Equity-backed Businesses (April 14, 2020)
- Katten Private Equity Practice Draws New Deal-Making Partner (March 16, 2020)
- Kimberly Smith addresses thriving Private Equity market in the midst of 2019 investment drop (December 9, 2019)
- *Working Mother* of the Year, Kimberly Smith, Shares Work-Life Balance Insight (September 30, 2019)

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- *Working Mother* Names Katten Among the 100 Best Companies (September 24, 2019)
- Katten Team Represents CR Fitness in Strategic Partnership Deal (July 15, 2019)
- Katten Praised in The Legal 500 United States 2019 Guide (June 11, 2019)
- Kimberly Smith Talks With *Law360* on PE Compliance Pitfalls (June 4, 2019)
- Kimberly Smith Shares Insight on PE Regulatory Compliance With *Law360* (June 3, 2019)
- Kimberly Smith Featured in *The Glass Hammer* on Authenticity's Role in Success (May 8, 2019)
- Katten Partners Discuss #MeToo and the PE Industry With *Private Equity Law Report* (May 3, 2019)
- Laura Keidan Martin and Kimberly Smith Named to Leading Women Lawyers List by Crain's Chicago Business (July 30, 2018)
- Katten Distinguished by *The Legal 500 United States* (June 14, 2018)
- Kimberly Smith Comments on Increased Interest in IT Investments by PE Funds (March 26, 2018)
- Kimberly Smith Named to Most Influential Women Lawyers List by *Crain's Chicago Business* (August 1, 2017)
- Katten Gains Employment Law Practitioner Daniel Doron in New York (June 6, 2017)
- Katten Distinguished by *The Legal 500 United States* 2017 (May 31, 2017)
- Kimberly Smith Quoted on High Valuations in the Autonomous Driving Industry (March 23, 2017)
- Kimberly Smith Comments on 2017 M&A Activity (February 21, 2017)
- Kimberly Smith Comments on Health Care Deal Making in the Wake of Trump Victory (November 18, 2016)
- Kimberly Smith Named Mergers & Acquisitions and Antitrust Trailblazer by *The National Law Journal* (September 26, 2016)
- Kimberly Smith Comments on Trends in Minority Investments in Private Equity Firms (August 5, 2016)

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- Kimberly Smith Addresses Strength of Katten's Private Equity Platform (July 27, 2016)
- Eighteen Katten Practices and 70 Attorneys Recognized by *The Legal 500 United States* 2016 (June 17, 2016)
- Kimberly Smith Comments on Her Return to Katten as Co-Head of the Private Equity Practice (October 13, 2015)
- Top Corporate Attorney Kimberly Smith Rejoins Katten To Help Lead Its National Private Equity Practice (October 8, 2015)
- Kimberly Smith Comments on Portfolio Company Exec's Average Incentive Pool (April 23, 2013)

Publications

- Katten Launches 2025 Middle-Market Private Equity Report (April 3, 2025)
- Katten Launches 2023 Middle-Market Private Equity Report (January 26, 2023)
- Pets a Good Bet: Private Equity Zeroed in on Animal Care, Katten Survey Finds (July 27, 2020)
- *Health Care Perspectives* (April 2017)
- Private Equity Looks To Be Innovative in Health Care (October 10, 2016)

Presentations and Events

- WAVE in Chicago: Annual Speed Networking Event (March 16, 2023)
- The Deal Economy 2022: Predictions and Perspectives (June 2, 2022) | *Moderator* | *The State of the Market: The Boom Continues*
- 10th Annual Private Equity New York Forum (May 4-5, 2022)
- The Deal Economy: Predictions and Perspectives (September 21, 2021) | *Moderator* | *The State of Middle Market Deal Flow*
- Private Equity US Forum (May 4–5, 2021) | *Moderator* | *Keynote Interview: Fireside Chat with Mitch Truitt*
- Navigating the Employment Landscape of 2021: A Conversation for Private Equity and Corporate Employers (March 16, 2021) | *Presenter*
- Selling a Middle-Market Business to a Private Equity Fund - Advice from Both Sides of the Table (March 4, 2021) | *Speaker*

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- Mergers & Acquisitions' Most Influential Woman Speak (February 24, 2021) | *Speaker | Fireside Chat*
- Private Equity & Corporate Strategies for a Distressed Economy, With Market Updates (July 22, 2020) | *Speaker*
- PEWIN Midwest & WAVE Present Diana Kapp of Girls Who Run the World (March 2, 2020)
- 6th Annual Booth-Kellogg Entrepreneurship Through Acquisition Conference (November 15, 2019) | *Presenter | Working With the Owner*
- Health Care Services Transactions: Current Trends and Insight (April 29, 2019) | *Moderator*
- WAVE: Fireside Chat with Chicago Mayoral Candidates (January 14, 2019) | *Participant*
- Global M&A in the Middle Market (May 22, 2018) | *Panelist | War Stories of Do's & Do Not's of Global Deal Making*
- Investing in China for US Private Equity Funds (February 26, 2018) | *Moderator*
- Health Care Services Transactions: Current Trends and Insight (October 18, 2017) | *Chair*
- 5th Annual Kayo Women's Private Equity Conference (October 2–3, 2017) | *Panelist | Sector Spotlight: Investing in Healthcare Services*
- 2017 Business Law Section Annual Meeting (September 15, 2017) | *Panelist | Cross-Border and Other Hot Topics in Private Equity M&A*
- Health Private Equity: Issues and Strategies in Provider Practice Management Transactions (May 15, 2017) | *Presenter*
- Health Care Services Transactions: Current Trends and Insight (February 27, 2017) | *Moderator*
- WAVE Workshop at the Kayo Women's Private Equity Conference (October 4, 2016) | *Panelist | How Behavioral Biases Impact Investing*
- Health Care Joint Ventures: A New Source of Deal Flow? (June 13, 2016) | *Moderator*
- Strategies for Female Entrepreneurs To Secure Funding and Protect Their Company's IP (May 26, 2016) | *Moderator*